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LETTER DATED 9 FEBRUARY 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ETHIOPIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you a statement by the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity on the current situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia, issued on 8 February 1999 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Duri MOHAMMED
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

99-03390 (E) 090299

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Annex

Statement by the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity on the current situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia, issued on 8 February 1999

I wish to reiterate my deep concern over the current fighting between Ethiopian and Eritrean forces on their common border. I am particularly saddened by this unfortunate escalation, which has occurred at a time when sustained efforts are being deployed by our continental Organization and many other concerned parties within the international community aimed at promoting a peaceful solution to the dispute between these two countries.

I wish to urge both Eritrea and Ethiopia to immediately put an end to the current fighting and recommit themselves to a peaceful solution to the dispute. In this regard, I wish to underscore that the Framework Agreement submitted to the parties by the High-level Delegation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) remains a viable and sound framework for a peaceful solution to the dispute. This Framework Agreement was endorsed by the OAU Central Organ at the summit level, which called on the two Parties to continue to cooperate with the OAU High-level Delegation with a view to creating the necessary conditions for the speedy implementation of the Framework Agreement. The latter was also widely supported by the international community, which welcomed it and considered the proposals it contained as being fair and balanced. The OAU Framework Agreement was, in particular, strongly supported by the United Nations Security Council and the European Union.

I wish to reiterate the disposition of OAU and its High-level Delegation to continue to engage the parties to the dispute, on the basis of the Framework Agreement submitted to the two parties for a peaceful settlement of the dispute. In this regard and in order to advance the peace process, the OAU High-level Delegation awaits the response which the Eritrean side undertook to communicate to it after receiving the clarifications sought on elements of the Framework Agreement.

Finally, I wish to appeal to the leaders of both countries to exercise restraint, to abide by their commitment and to do everything in their power to avert a further escalation of the conflict, which can only cause more suffering, loss of lives and destruction of property and infrastructure, and further complicate the peace efforts.